



# News Release

**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Northwestern Division  
Public Affairs Office

12565 West Center Road  
Omaha, Nebraska 68144-3869

Phone: (402) 697-2552  
Fax: (402) 697-2554

Contact: Paul Johnston  
(402) 697-2552  
Larry Cieslik  
(402) 697-2675  
Date: Dec. 10, 2004

---

## Water Management Monthly News Release

OMAHA – Releases from Gavins Point Dam averaged only 9,400 cubic feet per second (cfs) in November, less than a third of normal, a result of the 47-day shortened Missouri River navigation season.

“This is the lowest November release since 1992 when the basin was near the end of the last drought,” said Brig. Gen. William Grisoli, Northwestern Division Engineer. “Although the shortened navigation season allowed us to conserve water in the reservoirs, we have experienced very little change in storage since the end of September because of the lack of runoff.” System storage at the end of November was 35.7 million acre feet (MAF), up only 0.2 MAF from the record low set in mid-October.

Gavins Point releases were hiked to 10,500 cfs on December 1 to increase river flows prior to the arrival of extremely cold weather. Releases will be further increased as needed in anticipation of low temperatures that can cause rapid ice formation and reduced stages.

The current runoff forecast for 2004 is 16.7 MAF, only 66 percent of normal. “We have nearly completed 6 consecutive years of drought in Montana and 5 years elsewhere in the basin,” said General Grisoli. “The amount of mountain and plains snowfall this winter will be key to recovering any significant storage in Fort Peck, Garrison, and Oahe reservoirs by next year.”

Lewis and Clark Lake will remain near elevation 1207 feet msl during December.

Fort Randall releases were a low 7,700 cfs in November. They will be in the 9,000 to 13,000 cfs range during December to maintain the level of Lewis and Clark Lake. A gradual refill of Lake Francis Case will occur as it rises 3 feet to elevation 1341.0 feet msl by month's end.

Oahe reservoir rose 1.2 feet during November, ending the month at elevation 1576.0 feet msl. It is expected to rise only an additional one-half foot by March 1.

Garrison releases averaged 12,700 cfs during November, 8,100 cfs less than the 1967-2003 November average. They will be 15,000 cfs in December and 15,500 cfs in January and February. Lake Sakakawea fell 0.8 foot in November, ending the month at elevation 1812.3 feet msl. It is expected to lower to 1808 feet by March 1.

Fort Peck releases averaged only 4,300 cfs in November. They were increased to 5,500 cfs on November 29 where they will remain through December. A further increase to 6,000 cfs may occur in early January to balance intra-system storage.

The six mainstem power plants generated 289 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in November, the second lowest November on record and 36 percent of normal. The forecast for 2004 energy production is 6.5 billion kWh, compared to an average of 10 billion kWh.

***Daily and forecasted reservoir and river information is available on the Water Management section of the Northwestern Division homepage: [www.nwd.usace.army.mil](http://www.nwd.usace.army.mil).***

## MISSOURI RIVER MAIN STEM RESERVOIR DATA

	Pool Elevation (ft msl)		Water in Storage - 1,000 acre-feet		
	On Nov 30	Change in Nov	On Nov 30	% of 1967-2003 Average	Change in Nov
Fort Peck	2199.8	0.0	8,961	59	-2
Garrison	1812.3	-0.8	11,422	62	-167
Oahe	1576.0	+1.2	10,866	63	+258
Big Bend	1421.0	0.0	1,729	100	-9
Fort Randall	1338.3	-0.7	2,338	99	-43
Gavins Point	1207.6	+0.1	398	93	0
			35,714	65	+37

## WATER RELEASES AND ENERGY GENERATION FOR NOVEMBER

	Average Release in 1,000 cfs	Releases in 1,000 af	Generation in 1,000 MWh
Fort Peck	4.3	259	37
Garrison	12.7	758	98
Oahe	7.7	461	57
Big Bend	7.2	427	27
Fort Randall	7.7	460	43
Gavins Point	9.4	556	27
			289